

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 have been cancelled without prejudice, and claims 36-74 have been newly added. Claims 36-74 are now pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request reexamination and reconsideration of the application as amended.

Claims 1-35 have been rejected in view of various references, US Pat. No. 5,974,662 to Eldridge et al. ("Eldridge") and US Pat. No. 5,806,181 to Khandros et al. ("Khandros") being the principal references. Applicants have cancelled claims 1-35 in favor of newly added claims 36-74, mooted this rejection. (It should be noted that Applicants did not cancel the method claims for patentability reasons; rather Applicants intend to pursue such claims in a continuation application.)

New claims 36-74 patentably distinguish over Eldridge and Khandros.

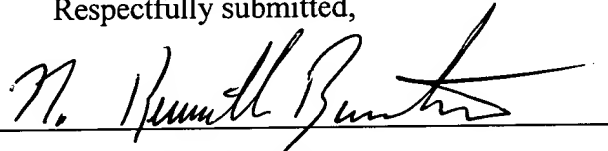
New independent claim 36 includes an interposer comprising a "substrate" with "elongate, resilient contact elements" on both of its sides. Claim 36 also specifies that the "elongate, resilient contact elements" on one side of the interposer directly contact terminals on a semiconductor device under test. Although Eldridge and Khandros (both of which are owned by the assignee of the instant application, Eldridge being also an inventor named in the instant application) include an interposer 504 with elongate, resilient contact elements 514, 516 on both of its sides, the contact elements 514, 516 do not directly contact the semiconductor device under test 508. Rather, the interposer 504 contacts a space transformer 506 which in turn contacts the semiconductor device under test 508. Moreover, Eldridge and Khandros (and the other cited art) do not teach how or even why one would want to eliminate the space transformer 506 such that the contact elements 516 directly contact the semiconductor device under test 508. Therefore, new claim 36 as well as its dependent claims (claims 37-57) patentably distinguish over the cited art.

New independent claim 58 includes a "support" in which an "interposer [is] moveable between a first position" and a "second position." In the first position, contact elements on the interposer do not contact terminals on a contactor; in the second position, the contact elements on the interposer contact the terminals on the contact. Eldridge and Khandros (and the other cited art) do not teach or suggest such a moveable interposer. Therefore, new claim 58 and its dependent claims (claims 59-74) also patentably distinguish over the cited art.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested, and early allowance of the claims is solicited.

Although Applicants believe that no extensions of time are required, Applicants petition the Commissioner for any extension of time deemed necessary for acceptance of this paper, and Applicants authorize the Commissioner to charge the fee for any such extension of time to Deposit Account No. 50-0285 (order no. P70-US). In a separate paper, Applicant has authorized payment of the fee associated with the presentation of four additional claims not previously paid for. Although Applicants believe that no other fees are due in connection with the filing of these papers, Applicants authorize the Commissioner to charge any additional fee due in connection with the filing of these papers to Deposit Account No. 50-0285 (order no. P70-US).

Respectfully submitted,



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